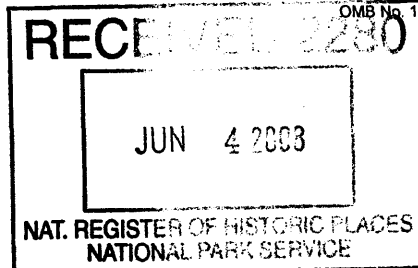


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Rivercroft Farm
other names/site number Weston Farm, John Weston House

2. Location

street & number #s 55, 59 and 60 River Street N/A not for publication
city or town Fryeburg N/A vicinity
state Maine code ME county Oxford code 017 zip code 04037

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 6/3/08
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

[Signature] 7-16-08
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
8	1	buildings
1		sites
3	5	structures
		objects
12	6	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC / Single Dwelling
- DOMESTIC / Institutional Housing
- AGRICULTURE / Storage
- AGRICULTURE / Agricultural Field
- AGRICULTURE / Animal Facility
- AGRICULTURE / Horticultural Facility
- AGRICULTURE / Agricultural Outbuilding

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC / Single Dwelling
- DOMESTIC / Institutional Housing
- AGRICULTURE / Storage
- AGRICULTURE / Agricultural Field
- AGRICULTURE / Animal Facility
- AGRICULTURE / Horticultural Facility
- AGRICULTURE / Agricultural Outbuilding
- COMMERCE / Specialty Store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

- LATE VICTORIAN / Second Empire
- EARLY REPUBLIC /
- LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH C. AMERICAN
- MOVEMENTS /
- OTHER / Silo

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation STONE / Granite
- walls WOOD / Weatherboard
- roof STONE / Slate
- other METAL
- WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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MATERIALS, continued

Roof: METAL / Steel

Foundation: CONCRETE

Walls: WOOD / Shingle
WOOD

Other: BRICK (chimneys)

DESCRIPTION

Rivercroft is the name given to an agricultural historic district in the Oxford County town of Fryeburg Maine. The farm has been worked by seven generations of the Weston family, and overall the family owns over 1000 acres in Fryeburg dedicated to farming or forestry. This nomination focuses only on that portion of the farm which contains the residential and agricultural properties immediately adjacent to and surrounding the 1870-73 John Weston House. Located in the western portion of Fryeburg the nominated properties are located north and south of River Street on the east side of the Saco River, and on the south side of River Street, west of the River. The nomination includes 8 contributing buildings, 1 non-contributing building, three contributing structures, five non-contributing structures, and one large contributing site containing over 185 acres of land in agricultural production.

The below described resources are identified by their reference numbers on Map # 2.

**COMPLEXES AND LAND SOUTH OF RIVER STREET
60 River Street**

The main concentration of agricultural structures and the John Weston House are located on the south side of River Street and occupy the Town of Fryeburg tax map number six, lots nine and ten. This sixty acre portion of the farm has a relatively short measure of road frontage: the bulk of the parcels stretch south along the east bank of the Saco River. All of the buildings are clustered in the northernmost third of this parcel, and the rest of the land is split between cultivated crops in the west and hayfields in the east. Deciduous trees separate the fields and buildings from the bank of the river.

The building complex is arranged in a roughly linear pattern with the oldest structures positioned closest to the road and newer structures stretching in a slight curve to the south. A U-shaped paved driveway provides access to the front buildings (house, yellow barn and farmstead), while a series of dirt roads meander through the remaining buildings and structures and lead to the fields. At the

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northwest corner of the lot is the Weston house; the yellow barn is located to its southeast, and the farm stand is immediately east of the latter building. Behind the farm stand is the first greenhouse, and at a slightly further removed is the free-stall, and heavy use area and carriage house. Behind the free-stall barn are four more greenhouses, arranged in two long rows.

1. John Weston House, 1870-73. Contributing Building.
Frances Fassett, architect.

The John Weston House is an impressive Second Empire style structure. Attributed to the prominent Portland architect Frances Fassett, the house was built by 1873.¹ It is located on the south side of River Street and is the westernmost building on the farm. A high granite retaining wall separates the gently sloping front yard from the former line of River Street, which prior to the construction of the 1947 bridge, had curved southwest around the homestead to the old Weston covered bridge.

The two-and-one-half story wood frame house is comprised of a front block under a mansard roof and two continuous ells under a gable roof. The ells are centered on, and extend south from the south wall of the main house. A hip roof porch extends across most of the front façade, and a square, one story entry is nestled in the southeast corner between the house and ell. Two bay window units are located on the east side of the main house's first floor. The entire structure sits on a granite foundation (the front section and first ell have a full foundation), and it is sided with yellow clapboards. The mansard roof is clad with diamond-shaped slate shingles. The porch and entry roof have asphalt shingles and the ell roofs are covered with a standing seam metal roof. All the roofing materials are executed in the same green color. With the exception of the dormers in the mansard and several windows in the ell, all the windows on the home are flanked by green painted louvered wooden shutters. Two slender, but decorative brick chimneys are spaced along the top ridge of the mansard roof, and another is located on the gable ridge at the junction of the two ells.

The front portion of the John Weston House measures forty feet ten inches by thirty-two feet seven inches, not including the six and one-half foot wide porch. The front façade is three bays wide and symmetrically composed. In the center of the first floor is a two-leaf wood door with elongated etched-glass panels and a wide glass transom which is also filled with etched glass. To either side of the door are paired, triple-hung wooden sash windows set in a shared, molded frame. On the second floor the east and west bays contain two-over-two wooden sash, while the center bay has a pair of narrow one-over-one sash again joined in a single frame. The front porch has a wooden deck and granite steps at both ends and the center. Four porch supports with plinth bases and decorative brackets support the overhanging hipped roof. A decorative wooden screen runs between the brackets just under the eaves. A prominent cornice, decorated with a thick frieze, dentil moldings and paired scrolled brackets provides the transition to the steeply pitched lower plane of the mansard

¹ According to family tradition the house was built in 1870. Previous research at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission assigned the date of the building to 1873.

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roof. Three sets of dormers feature decorative pedimented hoods with Eastlake type motifs carved on the tympanum, and slightly flared frames embossed with wooden star-like shapes at their base. The east and west dormers have two-over-two windows, while the center example is slightly wider and contains a two-over-two window flanked by narrow one-over-one sash. A second cornice is situated at the hip of the Mansard roof and is comprised of a much narrower frieze and rope molding. Other significant decorative elements on the house include attenuated pilasters, a wooden water table and at the corners of the Mansard roof, wooden caps with Ionic-type volutes at the intersection of the curb cornice.

The east elevation of the front part of the house is two bays wide. The window configurations on the second floor and roof level match those on the façade. As mentioned above, the first floor has two bay windows, consisting of three-light triple-hung sash on the sides and paired three-light triple-hung sash on the front. Wood panels are positioned above and below each sash unit and dentil and crown moldings decorate the eaves. The west elevation has three window bays on each level, and again all the windows are consistent in design with those on the façade. A single window bay is located adjacent to either side of the ell on the south elevation of the house.

In total the two ells measure about fifty three feet long by twenty-five and one-half feet wide. The length of the northernmost of the two segments is just under twenty-three feet long and the southern ell is thirty feet long. This section of the building features a boxed cornice with dentil moldings and narrow corner boards, but it has none of the other decorative elements that grace the front section of the house. On the east elevation the fenestration of the north ell features three evenly spaced bays, containing six-over-six wooden sash and the side entry on the first floor. The southern ell has three six-over-six widely spaced windows on the second floor, and a wide garage bay and four-panel door on the first floor. The western elevation has five, evenly spaced six-over-six windows spread across the second story level; the first floor is similar but with the addition of another four-panel door in the south ell and the replacement of the original sash in the northernmost bay with a tripartite picture window. A roughly four by ten foot, two-story outhouse is affixed to the western side of the south elevation. Each level contains a small two-light window. A wooden hatch located between the granite foundation capstones provides access for cleaning out the privies. A single six-over six window is centered under the gable peak.

The interior plan of the John Weston House is oriented around a central, three story hall. In the front portion of the house two rooms open off each side of the hall on all three levels. On the second floor the line of the hall continues through each section of the ells and provides access to additional bedrooms and storage areas. The hall features an entry vestibule with two-leaf interior doors under a second transom and the staircase has a carved walnut banister and turned newel post. The first floor rooms have four-panel doors, ten feet high plaster ceilings, wood floors covered with area carpets, and a complex, built-up molding profile on the window and door trim. Throughout this portion of the house most of the plaster walls are covered with wall paper. Oversize, two-panel, two-leaf doors lead from the hall into the northwest parlor, which is the largest of the first floor rooms. Both of the front

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rooms feature wood stoves set in front of formal fireplace surrounds. The example in the northeast living room has slender engaged columns while the slightly more elaborate example in the parlor has fluted pilasters with stylized capitals. This room and the dining room, in the southeast corner, feature an ovolo and bead crown molding and board and batten ceilings. The bay windows in the living rooms and dining room are set in an oval shaped niche. The dining room contains a large fireplace, also outfitted with a wood stove, but surmounted with a very simple surround and mantle. (This appears to be the only fireplace constructed on the chimney stacks – the other rooms were designed for wood stoves.) The dining room also has a built-in china cabinet next to the fireplace, picture rail on the walls and maple floors. The fourth room on this floor is a wood paneled office with exposed ceiling beams and a carpeted floor. A half bathroom is located under the stairs at the end of the hallway.

The northernmost ell contains the home's kitchen. This large room has linoleum floors and a tin ceiling, but was outfitted with modern appliances and cabinets in the mid-twentieth century. However, a large chimney stack is positioned in the southeast part of the room. The bricked-in fireplace retains a bake oven door on its façade and a set kettle is concealed by a cabinet on the west side of the stack. (A small parlor stove is now attached to the chimney.) Between the stack and the east wall is an enclosed back staircase to the second floor; a corresponding stair behind the chimney leads to the cellar. The southwest corner of this ell features a large, walk-in pantry. In the cellar the base of the brick stack has another set kettle. The entire floor of the cellar is constructed of large stone slabs with granite support pillars. The chimney bases in the front portion of the house are built of substantial granite blocks.

The southern section of the ell functions as a combination woodshed and garage. Wood is stacked on a dirt floor in the southeast corner of the open room, and an asphalt pad in the center of the space provides parking for one vehicle. An elevated walkway runs along the west and north wall of the ell, and connects the exterior doors with the first floor privy and a door to the interior of the northern ell.

The second and third floors are dedicated to bedrooms and storage. The ceilings are shorter (nine feet and eight feet four inches respectively) and the finishes are generally simpler. Floors are either plain or painted pine, and the trim elements are less complex. Each of the bedrooms in the front have provisions for stoves to be attached into the chimney stacks. Four rooms open off the north end of the second floor ell hallway and two additional bedrooms in the east and a long unfinished space on the west complete the southern ell. (Although there are only two finished rooms in this section of the ell five doorways were installed on the corridor, suggesting that additional rooms were contemplated.)

2. Yellow Barn. By 1880, with additions c. 1950 and c. 1985. Contributing building.

The Yellow Barn at Rivercroft is a two story, gable front timber frame structure with a long, one story addition on the south. The front part of the barn measures thirty-eight feet wide by thirty-six feet

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long; the addition matches the width and adds fifty one feet to the length. Affixed to the south end of the addition is a third segment of the building. This recently erected section contains a pair of large, single pitch sheds positioned against each other. The western shed is longer, but lower than the structure on the east, and together they give this portion of the barn an "L" shape. On the east side of the barn, at the junction of the front and middle sections is a one-story, shed roof wing that measures ten by fourteen feet. Erected as a milk house, it now functions as a walk-in cooler. On the west side a small, gable roof structure connects the barn to the silo, and an eight by sixteen foot lean-to is positioned against the west wall of the oldest portion of the barn.

All of the segments of this building have corrugated metal roofs and concrete foundations. A metal ventilator is centered on the ridge of the oldest section of the barn. The exterior wall material varies with both age and location. Painted clapboards are present on the north façade and the upper portion of the south wall of the main barn as well as the side and rear walls of the middle section, and the walls of the milk house and connector. Painted shingles are present on the east side of the main barn, while the western elevation and lean-to have unpainted shingles. The newer sheds are clad with unpainted vertical boarding.

The façade of the main barn, which faces the farm's driveway, is the most symmetrically composed and stylistically detailed. Centered on the ground level is a large, two-leaf hinged batten door flanked by a window bay to the east and west. Above this, but still under the level of the top plate are two loft doors, which while widely spaced are not quite evenly distributed across the width of the building. Higher, in the gable wall, are a pair of evenly spaced window bays, and above these, in the very peak of the roof is another, larger, batten hatch. A hoist beam is fastened to the underside of the eaves at the peak and hangs above the high loft door. All of the window bays are covered with green painted boards, obscuring the six-light sash. The façade of the barn also has a narrow frieze, cornice returns and corner boards.

On the east side of the main barn are two more window bays on the ground level. Three additional bays are evenly spaced along the east side of the first addition, and a batten loft door is positioned high in the wall between the northernmost bay and the milk house. There is another loft door on the west side of the addition and two more ground level window bays. The west side of the front portion of the barn has two blocked-up window bays on each level, and the lean-to retains three six-light sash in its western elevation and one in each of its narrow end walls. There are no window bays in the two rear sheds, however portions of the siding along the west wall have been removed to provide light, ventilation and access. A large equipment bay is cut into the south wall of the eastern shed, while the east wall of the western shed (where it extends south past its neighbor) is open from foundation to ridgepole.

At ground level the interior of the front barn and first addition feature one combined, long room. Thick longitudinal ceiling beams with wooden supports run the length of the front building on either side of the central aisle. In the addition a single longitudinal beam supported by steel columns is positioned at the center of the structure. The room has a low board ceiling and horizontal bead

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board walls. The concrete floor has manure troughs running the length of the building on either side of the center aisle. Along the exterior walls are raised concrete pads. In the front portion of the barn angled floor to ceiling wooden slats are positioned in a line near the exterior walls to partition off cattle stalls. If similar features existed in the addition they have been removed. A metal livestock pen is located in the southeast corner of the addition across from which is a storage room with boarded walls.

Currently, the upper level of the older barn is accessible only by climbing a staircase in the back shed and crossing the addition's low hay loft. The main barn features a traditional rafter and purlin style roof, and all of the major structural members are hewn. Scribe marks are evident at many of the joints but no marriage marks were observed. However, the orientation of the principal girts (east to west), the presence of additional major purlins, some irregularities in the tie joints (including ill-fitting rafter feet), and empty joist pockets and mortises suggests that the frame of this barn was either erected from pieces of an older structure or radically remodeled. (It may have originally been a three bay, eaves-front English-style barn that was re-oriented and fitted with a much higher and steeper pitched roof.) Positioned at the north end of the hay loft is a large, galvanized feed silo, no longer in use.

3. Silo. Circa 1950. Contributing structure.

This structure is located west of the second section of the Yellow Barn, and is attached to that building by a short, one story connector. Set on a concrete base, the silo is constructed of riveted metal plates and topped with a ribbed hemispherical dome. An access ladder and intake pipe are located on the south side of the structure.

4. Farm Stand. By 1880, remodeled circa 1985. Contributing building.

The Rivercroft farm stand is one of the older buildings on the property. It was first built as a wagon shed, and based on its location appears to have been one of the farm buildings depicted on the 1880 map of Fryeburg. As originally constructed, and as depicted in historic photographs, the wagon shed was a heavily framed, side gable roof building with two larger exterior sliding batten doors covering the two wagon bays on the north elevation. This portion of the building is covered with yellow clapboards and sits on a granite capstone foundation. Two windows of various configurations are located in each gable end.

In the mid-1980s, when the farm shifted the focus of its production to produce, the wagon shed was converted to a farm stand. At this time a porch with a low pitched roof supported by eight braced posts was attached to the front of the building and a shed roof addition erected against the south wall. The addition rests on a concrete foundation and is clad with painted wood siding. The new portion of the farm stand contains offices, produce counters and work spaces. The older portion of the building has exposed joists, a concrete floor, and barn board walls. It functions as a gift shop.

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Although the external sliding doors remain in place neither of the original equipment bays are functional. The eastern opening was filled with floor-to-ceiling glass panels, and the western bay contains a single modern door.

Attached to the east side of the farm stand at the junction of the original building and addition, is a small, timber frame structure with a side gable roof. Said to be one of the oldest structures in the Fryeburg area this small, nine by thirteen foot building had previously been attached to the back ell of the Federal-era Weston house that was dismantled when the current John Weston House was erected. Tradition asserts that this building was part of the homestead of one of the area's first settlers, Henry Young Brown, who settled the land in 1764. The exterior of the building does not indicate its age – it is sided with unpainted vertical boarding on the south and east and wood shingles on the north elevation. The single window bays centered on the north and south walls contain replacement sash. However, features located on the interior do suggest an eighteenth century origin for the building.

The southern two thirds of the building has a whitewashed ceiling of batten-style thick planks, and the walls in this section are covered with moderately wide boards, each of which are lapped horizontally over the course below. The casing on the southwest corner post has been coped to accept the angled edges of these planks and a paint line at the top of the wall indicates the previous location of some type of crown molding. On the west wall are two extra wide boards, un-lapped and set between two upright posts; below this a void in the wall shows where a small firebox had been positioned. Both wrought and cut nails are present in these finishes. The northern third of the room does not have any ceiling attached to the hewn joists, nor are any lapped boards present (only exterior sheathing nailed to the outside of the framing are visible). However, the northeast corner post exhibits a hand-planed casing with thumbnail corner bead.

It is not known the extent to which the integrity of this building was altered over the years – it was moved at least once and significant datable elements, such as doors and exterior cladding, have been lost. However, it does appear to contain enough early finishes and techniques to warrant additional study, both for its age and for the seldom seen lapped plank finishes. The farm stand, as a whole, also has undergone substantial alteration after the period of significance for this nomination, yet its original form and materials are clearly evident, and it still unequivocally yields an understanding of the farm's historical composition.

5. Carriage Shed / Shop. Second half of the 19th century. Contributing building.

This functional building faces north, towards the back end of the Weston House. It is a one story, gable front structure. It is clad in shingles, topped with a corrugated steel roof, and sits on a concrete slab foundation. Stacked and centered on the front façade are a pair of large hinged doors (currently constructed of plywood), above which are a pair of hinged loft doors, and above this is a one-over-one window. The façade also features narrow corner boards and cornice returns emanating from the slightly overhanging eaves. A wooden hoist protrudes from the façade just under

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the peak of the roof. Both the east and west elevations contain two window bays – those on the west side are boarded over but the east bays contain one-over-one replacement windows. A single blocked window bay is located on each level of the south elevation. A block chimney stack rises through the roof on the interior of the rear wall. The carriage shed/shop is balloon framed and features a single open space on the ground level and a loft above. A covered hatch in the ceiling is located just inside the front doors, and another opening in the northwest corner of the ceiling indicates the previous location of a staircase, now replaced by a wall mounted ladder. The building is currently used for vehicular storage, although a work bench located along the east wall suggests the building has had multiple functions.

Historic photographs from c. 1907 indicate that this building was originally located due east of its present location (where the free-stall barn is now). It was moved in the 1950s when the yellow barn was elongated. In addition, horizontal boards above the front doors, along with the historic photographs, show that the height of the main portal was reduced by approximately two feet.

6. Free-stall barn and office. Circa 1980. Non-contributing building.

The Free-stall barn is the largest, and most recent of the farm buildings at Rivercroft. It is located south of the Yellow barn and first greenhouse, and is oriented with the offset gable ridge running north to south. The barn sits on a concrete pad with low concrete side walls and has a corrugated steel roof. The walls are covered with vertical boarding. The north elevation has two large equipment bays, the easternmost of which is fitted with an overhead garage door. Four open bays are symmetrically distributed on the south elevation; the middle two bays are taller than those towards the side walls. The Free-stall barn features stud-and-truss construction. The interior is divided into a high, wide central aisle separated by a line of posts from the narrower, lower side aisles. At the center of the middle aisle a concrete feed/water trough runs the length of the building. Originally erected to house dairy cows, this expansive structure is now used to store the farm's machinery.

Attached to the northeast corner of the Free-stall barn is a front-gable roof office. This frame building is contemporary with the attached barn. It has painted clapboard siding, a concrete foundation, and a corrugated steel roof. The north elevation contains paired metal doors and two one-over-one modern windows. Although the age of this building places it outside of the period of significance, it is painted with the same yellow and green color scheme which characterizes the rest of the farm and which allows the office to blend in with the older buildings.

7. Greenhouses. Late 20th century. Five non-contributing structures.

The five greenhouses were erected in the later decades of the twentieth century. Each features wood end walls with entry doors and two windows. The sides and roof are formed of heavy plastic stretched over a slightly peaked pipe frame. A metal stovepipe protrudes through the north end wall

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of each structure. Greenhouse number 5 is positioned between the Free-stall barn and the back of the Farm Stand; the remaining structures are arranged in two rows south of the Free-stall barn.

COMPLEXES AND LAND NORTH OF RIVER STREET.

Roughly one third of the nominated property lies north of River Street. This portion of the farm is represented by the Town of Fryeburg tax map number six, lots two and three, and contains just over 63 acres configured in an irregular shape. On this side of the road are two residential complexes, each with associated agricultural outbuildings. The white cape (Abbot House), equipment shed, and brown barn are located at the east end of the parcel, while the brown house (Edward Weston House), sugar house and woodshed are located at the west end of the parcel, and are set further back from the road. Both complexes are surrounded by grass or cultivated fields, and a fenced paddock positioned north and east of the brown barn. Several hundred feet north of the road the land rises to a slight ridge, covered with mixed coniferous and deciduous trees. This ridge dips steeply to the west to meet the Saco River, and an old farm road, known as the Drift Road, follows the line of the ridge before swinging south along the upper terrace of the river to eventually meet River Street. North of the ridge the land is alluvial terrace intensively planted with various crops, with Christmas trees grown along the northeastern edge of the parcel.

8. White Cape (Abbot House). Circa 1834. Contributing building.
55 River Street

The White Cape is a low posted wood frame residence located on the north side of River Street. The one and one-half story building faces east toward a dirt dooryard. Attached to the north side of the house is a single-pitch wood shed/shop, which in turn is attached to a two-bay equipment shed and a gable front barn. The house rests on a granite foundation and has a corrugated steel roof. Two brick chimneys are positioned just east of the ridge, which runs north to south. Rectilinear in plan, the narrow building measures 56 by 18 feet, and has a 6 by 8 foot bump-out towards the north end of the rear elevation. A shed-roof dormer is located on the west side of the roof, south of the southernmost chimney. Narrow boards mark the corners of the clapboarded building, and a boxed cornice is positioned under the eaves. The primary façade, which is seven bays wide, gives the impression of two conjoined structures. The southernmost five bays feature a center door flanked on either side by six-over-six wood windows. The windows on the south side of the door are set at slightly wider increments than to the north. A wide undifferentiated segment of wall separates these latter windows from another door and a final six-over-six wood window which is slightly smaller than those in the south. Both doors are aligned in front of their respective chimneys and topped with three-light transoms.

The south elevation contains two six-over-six windows on the first floor and a third centered under the gable peak. Three additional six-over-six windows are evenly distributed across the rear elevation south of the small bump-out. North of this feature are two nine-over-six sash and a glass and wood door that leads to a deck. The dormer contains a pair of six-over-six sash and the north

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gable wall has a single two-over-two window in the peak.

The interior plan of the White Cape suggests that the structure is composed of an earlier half-cape attached to a later, five-bay center-chimney cape in the south. The southern two-thirds of the building contains two full-width primary rooms on either side of the center chimney. A narrow entry hall is east of the chimney and a larger room with a curved north wall protruding into the dining room is positioned west of the chimney. The southernmost room (living room) retains a simple fireplace surround surmounted by a warming cupboard, while the dining room fireplace has been retrofitted to accept a wood stove. The steep, straight-run staircase is located in a hall north of the dining room. A thick interior partition wall between the stair hall and the northern entry vestibule (also evident in the rear half of the house) marks the location where the buildings were joined. The northern segment of the building contains a small bedroom in the front and a kitchen positioned in the rear. The kitchen windows feature nine-over-six ovolo-moulded sash with a Federal style muntin profile, in contrast to the remainder of the first floor windows which have an elongated muntin profile characteristic of sash manufactured in the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century.

Two bedrooms are located in the attic level, at either gable end. The attic is not finished between them. While several of the first floor rooms retain their plaster walls other finishes have been updated, including drop tile ceilings (living room), batten panel ceilings (dining room and center rear room), patterned tin ceilings (kitchen); hardwood or linoleum floors (dining room and northern rooms, respectively); and painted board walls (north front bedroom and center rear room). Period features include wide pine flooring (center rear room), four-panel doors with Norfolk latches and beaded door jambs. All windows and doors are set in plain, un-moulded trim.

A single-pitch woodshed/shop is affixed to the north side of the white cape. It is sided with wood shingles and has a corrugated steel roof supported by five long, hewn rafters which rest on a ledger board attached to the house. A six-over-six window (with a Federal-style ovolo muntin profile) and a batten door are located in the west wall of the shed. A set of concrete steps lead from the woodshed to a cellar door in the foundation of the cape.

9. Equipment Shed. No date. Contributing building. 55 River Street

This building is positioned between the woodshed and barn. It has a side-gable roof covered with corrugated steel. The north exterior wall is clad with wood shingles while the south elevation contains two wide, open bays and a batten door adjacent to the cape. It is constructed of sawn heavy timbers but has no solid foundation or interior floor. Partial board walls separate the two bays on the interior and an enclosed staircase in the east bay leads to an unlit loft.

This structure is in poor condition and, according to the owner, may be taken down in the near future.

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10. Brown Barn. Circa 1830. Contributing building.
55 River Street

The Brown Barn is a two-story gable-front ground level New England style barn with a lean-to addition on the east side. The structure has board and batten walls (wood shingles on a portion of the west and north elevations), a corrugated steel roof, and a high concrete foundation. The front (south) elevation contains two sets of external sliding doors, one set positioned at the center of the main barn and the other located in the addition. A pair of six-light sash are positioned on the first level to either side of the center doors. These windows are hinged at the parting rail and the upper rank of panes tilt into the interior of the barn. Directly over each of these windows are hinged, batten loft doors. A third loft door is located in the center of the gable peak wall. The pattern in which the board and batten siding is laid indicates that the fenestration on this elevation has been altered. Originally, the barn had a much larger and higher center entrance and probably did not have the second level loft doors. These changes occurred when the barn was updated from a mixed use barn to a cattle barn in the 1950s.

The lean-to addition, which is of recent construction, is stud framed with common rafters and a concrete floor. It is essentially one large room with a horse stall positioned in the northeast corner. Three open window bays are positioned on the wall of the main barn under the roof of the lean-to. The west side of the main barn has three more of the hinged six light sash on the first floor, and a pair on either side of a pedestrian door on the north elevation. This end of the barn has board and batten siding only on the first level, above which are widely spaced planks tenuously covered with very old wooden shingles. Two loft doors, one above the other, are located high on the end wall.

The main barn is a timber-framed building constructed of hewn heavy timbers and sawn braces and nailers. The framing elements exhibit scribe-rule layout marks, but no marriage marks were noted. The barn is five bents long and three bays wide, with a rafter-purlin roof and a rounded ridge pole. Principal posts on either side of the original center aisle rise to the rafters. The girts stretch only from the plats to these posts; a high tie-beam (and now-removed lower tie beam) span the center aisle and connect the posts. Prick posts brace the rafters to the girts and lateral beams connect to, and are braced to, each bent. As originally constructed this barn had a central aisle with a pair of high scaffolds, flanked by second level hay lofts. This arrangement (which is still very much evident in the second level hay lofts) was altered when the barn was remodeled. The level of the lofts were raised approximately eight inches and a floor was laid over the center aisle. At the same time all of the interior first floor features were removed. A cement floor was poured (with a slight slope towards the north) and new stanchions installed. Immediately adjacent to the south door are a pair of cattle stalls with wooden doors and chest high cement partition walls. The doors bear the names of prized occupants: "The Lone Designer" and "Ace's Tiger Lily". Next to the stalls are concrete ramps that lead to elevated aisles against the east and west walls of the barn. These aisles then angle down towards the long lines of stanchions which are constructed of wood on the west and pipe metal on the east. The stanchions are set onto a raised concrete floor, which is separated from the center floor by long manure channels. A portion of the stanchions on the east side have been

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removed, and a three-sided workshop room has been partitioned off from the aisle. A dry sink is located in the north end of the west aisle.

11. Brown House (Edward P. Weston House). 1928, remodeled 1935. Contributing building.
59 River Street

Originally built as a garage in 1928 this building was remodeled into a residence in 1935. The one story, gable roof building measures 38 by 20 feet with a 6 by 10 bump-out on the west side. Wood shingles clad the building and it sits on a concrete slab foundation. A brick chimney runs through the corrugated steel roof just east of the ridge and just north of the center of the house. An enclosed porch with a low pitched roof, four one-over-one windows a four-panel and glass door is attached to the south gable end of the house and provides the primary entrance. Above the porch a two-over-two wood window is positioned in the attic wall. The east elevation has a single window in the porch and three two-over-two windows and a four-panel and glass door irregularly distributed along the length of the wall. The west elevation features two windows north of the bump-out and one south of this feature. The small addition has a single-pitch roof and a window on the north wall. An external staircase leading to the attic level is attached to the north side of the building.

The interior of the Brown House is divided along its entire length (including the porch) by a longitudinal partition wall, broken with only one door. The east half of the house contains a long living room with a projecting brick fireplace. A five-panel door leads to a small bedroom in the northeastern third of the building. The room arrangement on the west mimics that on the east, with a kitchen in the north and another living space in the south. A four-panel and glass door leads to the west half of the porch which functions as a sun room. Each front room has hardwood floors and panel and batten ceilings. The east room has papered walls over bead-board wainscot and the west room is finished with pine board paneling. A small built-in cupboard and drawer unit is positioned in the northeast corner of this room. A ladder positioned against the partition wall in the kitchen leads to a finished room in the attic space. A small bathroom is located in the bump-out.

12. Sugar House. Circa 1930, 1950. Contributing structure.
59 River Street.

Immediately west of the Brown House is a one-story sugar house. Originally built as a garage in the 1930s, it was converted to a sugar house two years later and a lean-to addition positioned on the west side at this time. The building faces south under a gable roof and has a concrete foundation. Centered on the corrugated steel roof is a low wooden ventilator. The south elevation has a wide central entrance with a pair of bi-fold bead-board doors and a smaller hinged batten door in the addition. Another hinged batten door is located over the main entrance and provides access to the attic area. There is one two-over-two window on the east elevation and another on the back wall. The interior of the main part of the building contains a wood-fired maple syrup evaporator in the center of the room and storage areas in the lean-to.

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13. Wood Shed. No date. Contributing structure.
59 River Street.

Facing southeast, this structure is open on three sides and the steel roof is supported by braced posts on the front. Split wood is stacked on the dirt floor against the back board wall. This structure was presumably built to store wood for either the Brown House, or for the Sugar House.

14. FIELDS, WEST SIDE OF SACO RIVER.

The third portion of the Rivercroft Farm consists of fields and crop land situated south of River Street on the west side of the Saco River. This lot is represented by the Town of Fryeburg tax map number six, lot number eight and contains 62 acres. The fertile intervale is divided between approximately 35 acres of crop land on the west and south, 17 acres of pasture in the northeast corner and ten acres of tree growth along the river bank. Dirt access roads line and define the various fields. There are no structures on this portion of the farm.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE _____

AGRICULTURE _____

Period of Significance

C. 1834 -1958 _____

Significant Dates

C. 1834 _____

1870-73 _____

C. 1950 _____

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Fassett, Francis H. (1823-1908), architect _____

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Rivercroft Farm in the western Oxford County town of Fryeburg, Maine is an extensive agricultural complex with a long history. Home to seven generations of the Weston family, the farm was established in the early nineteenth century. The property contains three residences, two major barns and twelve other agricultural structures erected from the 1830s through the 1980s, all set on over 185 acres of fertile land on the east and west banks of the Saco River. Notable among these buildings is the Second Empire style John Weston House, designed by Portland architect Francis H. Fassett, which replaced the family's Federal-era home by 1873. Currently a produce farm, the Weston family's agricultural history has included general farming, cattle trading and dairy production, as well as lumber and forest products. Rivercroft is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its agricultural significance in a local context, and under Criterion C for the architectural distinction of the John Weston House.

AGRICULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Criterion A: The property is associated with broad patterns of Maine's agricultural history.

The town of Fryeburg is located in the western foothills, between the Cumberland County town of Bridgton and the state boundary with New Hampshire. The town is approximately seven miles wide and twelve miles long, but through this the Saco River meanders for over thirty-one miles and creates great swaths of fertile intervals along its gentle banks. According to geographer George Varney, "The Fryeburg intervals are noted for their richness and beauty, containing nearly 10,000 acres, which are frequently overflowed and fertilized by the Saco. (Page 246.) In 1723 exploratory excursions from Massachusetts first came to the region, where the men encountered a substantial Pequawket village. Settlement did not commence in earnest until after 1762 when the largest part of the town was granted by Massachusetts to General Joseph Frye, who had been at the siege of Louisburg. The first settlers came from Concord, New Hampshire in 1763 and the town was incorporated in 1777. It was later found that part of Frye's grant was actually over the New Hampshire line and in order to rectify the error a tract known as Fryeburg Addition was added to the north end of town in 1766. (It is now part of the town of Stow.) In 1802, when the lines were re-surveyed another section was appended to the southern boundary of the town - this portion had previously been a part of Brownfield.

The first settler on Rivercroft was Captain Henry Young Brown who, in 1764, "was granted a township six miles square above Colonel Frye's grant on the Saco River". (Barrows, Fryeburg: An Historical Sketch, p. 33.) For his homestead Captain Brown built first a settler's cabin to which he later added a north facing cape on the eastern bluff of the Saco River. Learning that his homestead was actually located in Fryeburg he sold the parcel to John Codman of Lincoln, Massachusetts. Codman sold the property, which contained just over forty-six acres and the buildings thereon, to Ephraim Weston on March 6, 1800. When the Weston family actually settled on the property is unknown as no Westons are enumerated in the Federal Population censuses for 1800 or 1810 in Fryeburg (although Ephraim and at least one of his sons, Jeremy, appeared in Jay, Maine, where

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they also owned land, in 1810). When Ephraim sold half of the Brown/Codman homestead in 1806 to his son Edward (1781-1853), both men were identified as being of Fryeburg, and according to the historian Barrows, Edward carried the mail to and from Portland in the late 1810s.²

Early in their tenure on the property the Weston family erected a new Federal- style two story house on the west end of Brown's cape, and then they started to farm. Little is known regarding the livelihoods of Ephraim and Edward other than that they were referred to generally as farmers or yeomen in the vast number of deeds they executed. The size of the farm grew steadily. Edward either purchased land outright or purchased mortgages or rights in parcels - one gained of Samuel Souther in 1843 brought Weston an interest in 16 lots throughout town, many of them containing valuable intervale property.³ According to the 1850 Federal Agricultural Census the farm was valued at \$2,500 and contained forty improved acres and thirty-five unimproved acres. Edward and four of his sons were identified as farmers, and they had between them four horses, six cows, two pair of oxen, seven other cattle, thirteen sheep and three swine. They produced 250 pounds of butter, thirty pounds of wool and forty tons of hay among other crops.⁴ By the time that Edward died in 1853 his estate included land on both sides of the road and the west side of the River as well as the Starks Hill Lot and Starks meadow lot in another section of town.⁵ Edward's estate also included two lots in Bachelder's Grant, four lots in Mason Township and three lots in Bartlett, New Hampshire. According to the terms of his will Edward appointed three trustees to oversee the management and distribution of his lands until all of his eight surviving children reached their majority. However' he bequeathed two of his sons by his first wife, Charles and James, the land on the north side of the road and west side of the river, as well as the Starks Hill properties. He gave the homestead south of the road to his wife Rachel and son John with the provision that John care for and provide accommodations for his mother and sister Jane during the rest of their lives, and support his brothers George and Edward through their school years. The senior Edward also specified that his "stock and farming tools and furniture and provisions" were to go to John and Rachel. (Probate docket # 114, Edward Weston, 1853.)

With the transfer of the farm to John Weston (1834-1909) came a shift from general farming to a more specialized focus: livestock trading, including sheep, pigs, horses, and most importantly, cattle. As a result of increased attention to breeding, the quality of both beef and dairy cattle improved from the 1830s to 1850, and cattle drovers working the rural parts of the state were key to the sale of these new breeds. Clarence Day, in A History of Maine Agriculture provides some statistics:

²Edward purchased the second half of the property from his father in 1828. See Book 4, page 136 (1806) and Book 14, page 216 (1828).

³Book 23, page 80, Western Oxford Registry of Deeds, December 5, 1843.

⁴Ephraim Weston died in 1830. No probate documents have been found for his estate.

⁵The Starks Meadow Lot and Starks Hill Lot remain in the possession of the Weston family and constitute a portion of the larger land holdings of the farm which are outside of the boundaries of this nomination.

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Maine was a beef producing state for several decades both before and after the Civil War, and large herds were driven annually to Brighton and other markets in Massachusetts. Moses Greenleaf estimated that, in 1827, about 10,000 cattle were driven to those markets, and that 2,000 more went Down East or to the upper St. John. That made 12,000 marketed on the hoof, besides those shipped by boat, alive or dressed. In 1845 the eastern market was preferred to Brighton because prices were higher. However 14,000 cattle were driven to the markets near Boston in 1850. During the decade from 1850 to 1860, the great bellowing droves that crossed the bridges on the Piscataqua dwindled as more and more shipments were made by rail. (Day, 1854, page 183.)

A 1954 newspaper interview with John Franklin Weston provides additional details on John Weston's cattle drives:

Grandfather John Weston built the present Weston home overlooking the Sco River...He started buying and selling cattle in 1854 when he became associated with his brother-in-law, Benjamin Glines. Grandfather was the buyer and he would leave Fryeburg, carrying a bag of gold coins, for Danville, Quebec. The trip was made by horse and buggy.

Grandfather would buy from 100 to 150 head of livestock there in the Danville area and then with the aid of several men start over the road with the drove for the long trip to Fryeburg.

After a few days rest the cattle would be assembled with the livestock that had been bought here in Maine, and then the drove of 200 to 350 head would be started over the road on a ten-day trip to the Brighton Market.

Four or five men and a good dog would handle the big drove as they left Fryeburg village always on a Sunday morning. The first day's stop was at Freedom, N.H., and the subsequent stops were Effingham Falls, Brookfield, North Rochester, Madbury, Exeter, Kingston or North Hampton, N.H., Peabody and Watertown, Mass., and the final day into the Brighton market. (*Portland Press Herald*, April 2, 1954).

The practice of driving cattle overland to the Boston market continued until after John's son George W. Weston (1870 - 1938) took over the farm in 1890. (The family still retains a permit from the City of Boston, dated October 23, 1878 allowing Glines and Weston to drive their cattle from Brighton to Everett, Massachusetts.) It is clear from an analysis of the 1870 and 1880 Federal Agricultural Census that John Weston continued the tradition of investing in land and expanding the farm that his father and grandfather had instituted. For example, the 1870 census indicates that John Weston had amassed sixty-five improved acres and three hundred acres unimproved; ten years later the latter statistic had increased to 295 acres of meadow, and 1,000 acres of woodlot. The value of the farm jumped from \$5,925 to \$15,000 (reflecting in part the new house), and the value of livestock rose from \$1,294 to \$3,575. The number of horses on the farm doubled (from four to

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eight), the number of oxen increased from six to twenty-six and although the number of other cattle present in 1870 numbered thirty as compared to twenty ten years later the census also accounts for eighteen calves dropped and forty other cattle purchased and sold. (These figures presumably account for his own farm herd rather than those driven to market on commission.) While the amount of butter made on the farm decreased from five hundred pounds to three hundred in 1880, Weston sent 4,200 gallons of milk to be processed at one of the local butter or cheese factories. After the Civil War, the price of wool fell dramatically and stayed low through the 1870s, and correspondingly no sheep were recorded on the farm in 1870 or 1880 - although Weston did briefly harvest some orchard products. The 1880 census also reveals that Weston, who was an active member of the Oxford County Agricultural Society, followed progressive agricultural practices, including investing in fertilizers for his fields. Among the crops Weston reported his yield of hay remained steady at 75-80 tons but his yield of oats decreased from 220 bushels to 160 bushels. On the other hand, his corn, which was in demand as silage for his 27 dairy cows or was sent to the corn cannery in Fryeburg, increased from 200 to 450 bushels. As the historian Clarence A. Day acknowledged, the "dairy and sweet corn enterprises were closely related. Dairy men liked to grow sweet corn because it gave them a cash income and also furnished fodder and silage for the cattle." (Day, 1963, p. 28.) In this manner, as with others, Weston was following the local trends.

In either 1870 or 1873 the Weston family made a significant alteration to their property. The Federal-era two story front portion of their house was detached and moved to the corner of Smith and Warren Street in the village, and Brown's first cabin was moved from the back of the cape to the side of the wagon shed (Farm Stand).⁶ John Weston engaged Portland architect Francis H. Fassett to design an imposing Second Empire style house. The new structure included two formal parlors, a three-story entrance hall, a large dining room, well-equipped kitchen, eight bedrooms in the main house and four in the ell over the kitchen. The level above the southern ell provided two additional bedrooms and space for more. In 1870 the family included John's mother and brother as well as his wife and first three children and possibly a niece. It is likely, however, that Weston intended that some of the ell bedrooms were to be available for either farm laborers, or men assisting him with the cattle drives. In both 1870 and 1880 the agricultural census reported Weston as having paid out \$600.00 in wages, but only in the latter census (and none that follow) were two unrelated men who 'work on farm' residing in the house.

According to family tradition, while the new house was under construction the Westons lived across the street in the White Cape. The history of this house is unclear. Notes prepared by Mrs. John F. (Elizabeth) Weston in 1979 suggests that the house was erected circa 1834 - although based on the finishes and design, this may actually reflect the date at which the two sections were joined. Whether the building was built or expanded by Edward Weston or one of his family members is unknown, nor can it be ascertained whether any land on the north side of the road was part of the parcel Ephraim Weston purchased in 1800. (The former south line of Fryeburg appears on some

⁶According to the family, this structure still exists, although it has been greatly altered.

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maps to have been positioned just north of River Street, possibly along the Drift Road, in which case the cape would have been on Weston Land. Other maps, including the undated plan of the division of lots in the Town of Fryeburg are more ambiguous about the location of the line.⁷) The property was bequeathed by Edward Weston to his sons Charles and James Weston in 1853. Subsequently, James quitclaimed his interest in the property and in 1858 Charles Weston executed a deed for four acres, including these buildings to William C. Towle. Strangely, the deed was not recorded in the Registry of Deeds until 1897. The 1858 County map depicting Fryeburg village shows the name Dr. W. Towle at this property, but on the 1880 map of Fryeburg Village in the Atlas of Oxford County the house was again labeled J. Weston. The 1860 census appears to place Dr. William Towle in residence at this property, but not in 1870. No deed has been found that returned the property to the Weston Family, although it was devised with the estate of Jane Weston (John's sister) to George Weston in 1911.⁸

Examination of the 1880 map of Fryeburg reveals that most of the historic structures at Rivercroft Farm were extant by that time. On the south side of River Street (Bridge Street on this map) is a property labeled J. Weston which includes the John Weston House, erected 1870-73, and four barns or agricultural structures, including the Yellow Barn, the wagon shed (Farm Stand) and attached early cabin. The fourth structure is attached to the south end of the Yellow Barn, and may have been the present Carriage Shed/Shop. (A postcard of the property taken by 1907 depicts this building as free-standing and placed between the wagon shed and the Yellow Barn.) Across River Street is the second property labeled J. Weston which contains the White Cape, Equipment Shed and Brown Barn. No significant additions or alterations were made to the property for over four decades thereafter.

In 1890 George W. Weston, John's son, took over the farm. George Weston was also a livestock dealer, but he took a different approach to the business, as related by his son in 1954:

When father took over the business he stopped going into the Canada area. He bought all his livestock here in Maine and New Hampshire. For many years he drove the animals all the way over the road. Later he drove them as far as Salisbury, N.H. and then they were loaded onto railroad cars and transported to the Boston market.

Then after the railroad came to Fryeburg, Father started loading the livestock into the cars Monday and they arrived at Boston Tuesday morning which was always Market Day at

⁷Compare the undated map of Fryeburg showing lots and divisions (Volume 24, p. 13.5, Massachusetts Land Office Records) with the 1794 plan of the outline of Fryburg, (Volume 21, p. 14, Massachusetts Land Office Records).

⁸Adding to the confusion regarding this property is a schedule of real estate belonging to John Franklin Weston upon his decease in 1972. The house and lot across the street is referred to as the 'Abbot Place'. Charles Abbott and Dr. Towle appear to have been neighbors in 1860, and William Abbott and John Weston were enumerated next to each other in 1880.

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Brighton. I noticed an entry in father's ledger for 1899. Evidently it was a depression year, for in September when Dad was unable to sell his shipment in Boston, he shipped the entire load to Buffalo, N.Y. and sold the 27 steers for three cents, and three and a half cents a pound. He received a total of \$753.70 for the shipment. "I made a few dollars at that," was the final notation in this entry. (Portland Press Herald, 1954).

The Portland and Ogdensburg Railroad first came through Fryeburg in 1873, and by 1877 had established connections through New Hampshire and Vermont on to Quebec. Considering their Canadian trade it is surprising that the Weston family did not use the rail line to move cattle earlier. But once they did, it helped them to expand the geographical reach of their business. In addition to cattle, George Weston also traded in wood products. In the article "Fair Fryeburg" published in the October 1909 *Industrial Journal* a short profile of George Weston was included:

Geo. W. Weston is one of Fryeburg's most active farming and business men. His home is near Pine Hill and he has 120 acres largely intervalle land. He is an extensive buyer of hemlock bark throughout New England and Canada and ships annually about four thousand cord to the Dunn, Green Leather Co., at Hudson, Mass....He is also an extensive cattle dealer and ships a car of cattle every fortnight to Brighton. (Page 27.)

In 1920, George Weston started transporting his cattle locally in automobiles, starting with a Model T that could move only two or three head at a time, and in time invested in larger vehicles that could cover greater distances.

While most farms had some woodlot, the 1880 agricultural census reported that John Weston owned 1,000 acres of woodlot: almost three times as much as he had in field or pasture. Maine has always had a strong wood products industry, and for many farmers winters worked in the woods were the natural complement to summers in the field. Yet the scale of George Weston's hemlock bark trade dwarfed the fifty cords of wood that his father cut in 1880.

It is important to note that throughout the tenure of both John and George Weston the land holdings of the farm continued to evolve. As with other multi-generational family endeavors many of the property transactions occurred between family members. For example, some portions of the farm that were distributed by Edward Weston to his children in 1853 were not re-integrated under a primary owner until after the death of John Weston in 1909 and his sister Jane two years later. John's son George stood to inherit his father's estate but it appears that his father had possibly lost some of the property in the late nineteenth-century. Jane Weston, George's uncle, purchased many parcels of the family farm, including all of the portions of the farm covered by this nomination, from a William Mason in 1901.⁹ Jane, in turn, willed most of this property to George, with the exception of

⁹These transactions are most succinctly presented in the probate docket of John Franklin Weston, # 72-266.

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the western portion of the Abbot place (white cape), which she gave to George's brother Edward Payson Weston (1859-1939). In 1928 Edward erected an automobile garage on this parcel. He was a land surveyor by trade and consistently appears as part of the extended family living in the John Weston House. In 1935, a year after his nephew John Franklin Weston moved into the home with his wife Edward converted the garage to a small house and added another small garage. This is now the home of the seventh generation Weston to work the farm, another John Weston, born in 1975.

John Franklin Weston (1910 - 1972), the only child of George and Grace Weston graduated from Dartmouth with a degree in history and never intended to farm. During the Depression he returned to help his father and after his father's death in 1938 took over the farm. Between then and his death in 1972 John Franklin both shifted the focus of the operation and modernized the infrastructure. As he explained in 1954, he concentrated on dairy cows and re-established ties with Canada.

I became associated with father in 1932 when I was 22 and took over the business when he passed away in 1938. The following year I began buying livestock in Canada the same as grandfather had done. I was surprised one day when I visited the home of a family near Danville and the oldest woman in the house recalled that a man by the name of Weston called there many years before to buy cattle...I centered my efforts in buying dairy cows - the Holstein breed. All of these animals were shipped by car to Fryeburg where I in turn unloaded them and sold them to Fryeburg dairymen. Many of these men got their dairy foundation from these Canadian cattle that I bought. There are many herds in practically every one of the New England states that were started from the livestock I sold. One week I sold dairy animals in every one of the New England states.

Today a five-hour trip by truck replaces the ten-days of trudging over the narrow dusty roads that was carried on by grandfather and father. This modern method also gives an opportunity to handle many more head. Just recently I shipped out 254 calves as well as a carload of beef cattle. Every Monday morning at least 20 head of beef and 50 calves are sent to the Boston market.

I also buy a lot of livestock here in Maine. An associate buys the animals from Waterville to Bangor, the coast to Skowhegan, and they are shipped from the stockyards at Burnham Junction. I am in the market Tuesday to sell these weekly shipments.

I have traveled extensively through the East and I believe the Saco Valley area is one of the outstanding dairy sections I have ever seen. The group is a progressive one and this is proven by the recent move of inaugurating a bulk tank truck milk collection. It indicates that the Saco Valley is taking a leading part in the dairy industry in the East. (Portland Press Herald, 1954).

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John Franklin Weston's business benefitted from the overall economic prosperity that followed World War II. Starting about 1950 he made numerous changes to the by then seven-decades old farmstead that modernized the establishment. He erected the steel-riveted silo and built a long extension onto the Yellow Barn. Both the Yellow and Brown barns were re-footed with concrete and the old stalls and partitions were removed in favor of long rows of wooden or metal stanchions and convenient manure troughs that could be cleaned mechanically. To facilitate pick-up by Oakhurst Dairy a large milk tank was built onto the east side of the Yellow Barn. At the same time he converted the c. 1935 garage next to the Brown House into a maple sugar production facility.

Under John Franklin's tutelage the buildings on either side of the road were divided by function. The south side contained his own personal herd of dairy cows, which were housed and milked in the expanded Yellow Barn. The Brown Barn across the street was utilized mainly for the livestock trade. As related by his son, John Franklin would wait at the cape to hear the evening freight train whistle as it passed a crossing south of town, and then they would head to the station. Cattle to be auctioned locally would be herded to the Brown Barn and put on display. Farmers would gather there to view and purchase the livestock, usually all of which would be sold by midnight. Beyond the local market Weston also established several long standing relationships with major meat processing companies. One of these was with the New England Dress Meat and Wool Company, a Swift processing plant in Somerville, Massachusetts. Another was with the Lancaster Livestock Exchange in Pennsylvania, where livestock was sold on commission.

John Franklin Weston also continued the family's woodlot management and trade in pulpwood, but his interests extended to civic service as well. According to his obituary he was the president of the West Oxford Agricultural Fair (Fryeburg Fair) and the Maine Association of Agricultural Fairs. He was also a selectman in Fryeburg, on the Board of Trustees of Fryeburg Academy, and between 1954 and 1958, the Chairman of the Republican State Committee.

Although the period of significance for this nomination ends in 1958 the evolution of the farm did not. John Franklin's son, George Carleton (born 1941) took over the farm after his father's death and continued both to trade dairy cows and milk a substantial herd into the 1980s. During this period he erected the Free-stall barn and installed a new milk tank in what is now the attached office. However, while Weston did not participate in the 1986 Federal Government whole-herd buyout program which shuttered many of the established farms in the Saco Valley, the next year he divested himself of the herd and concentrated on raising replacement heifers, which he shipped to dairy farmers in Vermont. At the same time he started to shift from livestock to produce. In the mid-1990s Rivercroft completed this transition back to a diversified, produce-based operation which was in some ways a return to the agricultural traditions of Ephraim and Edward Weston. During this process the family transformed the wagon shed into the Farm Stand, added the green houses and converted (and built) larger facilities into storage for the increased number of machines necessary for tilling and harvesting. They also started to cultivate Christmas trees, which now number approximately 3000, and continue to maintain and selectively harvest over 1000 acres of timberland in the Fryeburg area. Feed and mulch hay, and vegetable crops are grown on the fertile intervals and on other parcels the family

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owns in Fryeburg and in the Conway area of New Hampshire.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Criterion C: Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, and represents the work of a master (architect).

With a career that spanned more than five decades and resulted in hundreds of commissions, the cumulative effect of Frances H. Fassett's legacy has yet to be thoroughly evaluated. However, there is no doubt that his talents and contributions were widely acknowledged during his lifetime. The following biography of Fassett was prepared by Richard Herndon in 1897:

His early education was acquired in the common schools of his native city. He left school, however, at the age of fourteen, and for the next four years was a clerk in the store of a general trader in Bath. He then was apprenticed to the carpenter's trade, and subsequently studied architecture in the offices of architects in Boston and New York. In 1850 he began the practice of his profession in Bath; his operations gradually extending up the Kennebec River to Augusta, where, after the great fire of 1862, he practically rebuilt the city. In 1864 he removed to Portland, where he has continued in the active business of his profession to the present time. During his career Mr. Fassett has designed many of the public and business buildings and dwellings erected in Maine and neighboring states. Among the more noteworthy monuments to his taste and skill throughout the state are the Maine General Hospital, the new Congress Square Hotel, the Baxter Building (the largest business block in Maine), the Portland Public Library, the Payson Memorial Church, also the Jackson, McLellan, Butler and High school buildings, all in Portland; several of the buildings of the Maine Insane Asylum, Augusta; the Hancock County Court House, Ellsworth; and St. Mary's School in Biddeford. He also rebuilt the City Building of Portland after the great fire of 1866, and is engaged in building the new Church of the Sacred Heart in that city. (Herndon, p. 342).

After the Great Fire of 1866, Fassett was largely responsible for the rebuilding of Portland's public landscape, and he earned the moniker "Maine's undisputed architect for all seasons." (Shettleworth, p. 186). However, his post-fire oeuvre concentrated on a 'personal version of High Victorian Gothic architecture.' (Shettleworth, p. 187). Not until after Fassett entered into a partnership with John Calvin Stevens in 1880 did his designs start to incorporate Queen Anne and Shingle Style elements, a trend that continued to be developed in conjunction with later partners.

Most of Fassett's commissions, especially prior to his joining forces with Stevens, shared two common characteristics: they were executed in urban settings and were primarily commercial,

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ecclesiastical, or public buildings. A preliminary checklist developed by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission has identified 186 Fassett commissions between 1851 and 1880. Of these, 76 occurred in Portland, 81 were in the urban areas of Auburn, Augusta, Bangor, Bath, Biddeford, Brunswick, Hallowell, Lewiston, Waterville or Westbrook. Only 40 of the overall number of commissions were for properties labeled house or double house, and of these all were in urban settings except for a house built in Paris in 1879 (population 2931), two houses in Yarmouth in 1879 and 1880 (population 2021) and the Weston House in Fryeburg (population 1633). Whether the scarcity of Fassett designed houses in the small towns and villages is a result of the limits of his reputation, a reflection of his personal preferences, or the reluctance of property owners in smaller towns to hire an architect is an unanswered but intriguing question. Unfortunately, while the Weston House is probably the most rural of his non-urban commissions, nothing is known about how or why John Weston chose Fassett as his architect.

Only three properties were known to have been erected in the Second Empire Style in Fryeburg during the nineteenth-century. This style, which made its first appearance in Maine in 1857 (just two years after being introduced at a Paris Exhibition), became popular in the state's larger cities after the Civil War, in part due to Fassett's use of the style while rebuilding commercial and residential properties in Portland after the fire. Due to the extra residential space created in the full Mansard roof the style was especially suited to urban lots, but it was never as popular in a rural context. In his Oxford County survey of architecture, Randall Bennett identified only about two dozen residential and six commercial or public examples of the style. One of the earliest examples in the county is a modest, one story, cross-gabled, eclectic example built on a town lot in Fryeburg in approximately 1860 that was later the home, briefly, of Admiral Robert E. Peary. A 'monumental' example of the style was erected for the developer of the 'Hersey Plow', Alvah Hersey in Paris in 1865, and another significant example, and one closer in scale to the Weston House, was the 1870 E. A. Boothby House, located in the adjacent village of Denmark. Remarking of the Weston House, Bennett states that it "is one of Oxford County's finest Second Empire or Mansard style residences and equals in its architectural distinction the marvelous panorama of the White Mountains visible from its location on the east bank of the Saco River." (Page 150.) Fryeburg's third Second Empire Style property was a more restrained example and served as the North Fryeburg Post Office. While there were few examples of the style, those that were erected serve today, as Bennet states so eloquently, as "important remnants of an era of prosperity that existed in this agriculturally-based region during the second half of the nineteenth century." (Page 123.)

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 185.89 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 1 | 9 | | 3 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 9 | | 4 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 9 |

3 | 1 | 9 | | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | | 4 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 9 |

Zone Easting Northing
2 | 1 | 9 | | 3 | 4 | 0 | 9 | 3 | 7 | | 4 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

Zone Easting Northing
4 | 1 | 9 | | 3 | 4 | 0 | 9 | 6 | 4 | | 4 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 3 |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title CHRISTI A. MITCHELL, ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

organization MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION date 18 January 2008

street & number 55 CAPITOL STREET, STATION 65 telephone (207) 287-2132

city or town AUGUSTA state ME zip code 04333 -0065

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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UTM's continued

- 5: 19/ 340961 / 4875400
- 6: 19/ 340601 / 4874653
- 7: 19/ 340198 / 4874247
- 8: 19/ 340295 / 4874921
- 9. 19/ 339880 / 4875089
- 10. 19/ 339867 / 4875957

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the nominated property are depicted on map # 1 and include parcels depicted on the Town of Fryeburg tax map number 6, lots 2, 3, 8, 9, and 10. See Map #1, attached.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

There are over 1,000 acres of property owned by the Weston Family that are associated with the commercial Rivercroft Farm. This nomination has been limited to those contiguous portions of the farm that contain historic structures and adjacent agricultural lands and were included in the purchase of the original homestead 1800 or shortly thereafter.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

See Map # 3 for location of each photograph.

Photograph 1 of 10

ME_OxfordCounty_WestonFarm_001.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

23 October 2007

Facades of John Weston House, # 1, and Yellow Barn, # 2; facing south.

Photograph 2 of 10

ME_OxfordCounty_WestonFarm_002.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

4 January 2008

Yellow barn; facing southwest.

Photograph 3 of 10

ME_OxfordCounty_WestonFarm_003.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

4 January 2008

Yellow Barn, # 2, showing c. 1985 (left) and c. 1950 (middle) additions; facing north northwest.

Photograph 4 of 10

ME_OxfordCounty_WestonFarm_004.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

4 January 2008

White Cape, # 8, Equipment Shed, # 9, and Brown Barn, # 10 on north side of road; facing northwest.

Photograph 5 of 10

ME_OxfordCounty_WestonFarm_005.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

4 May 2007

Brown House, # 11, Sugar House, # 12 and Wood Shed, # 13; facing northwest.

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PHOTOGRAPHS, continued

Photograph 6 of 10

ME_OxfordCounty_WestonFarm_006.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

4 May 2007

Rear view of Yellow Barn, c. 1985 addition, # 2, Silo, # 3, and Weston House, # 1; facing north.

Photograph 7 of 10

ME_OxfordCounty_WestonFarm_007.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

4 May 2007

Carriage Shed/Shop, # 5; facing southwest.

Photograph 8 of 10

ME_OxfordCounty_WestonFarm_008.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

23 October 2007

Farm Stand, # 4; facing south.

Photograph 9 of 10

ME_OxfordCounty_WestonFarm_009.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

23 October 2007

Interior, Weston House dining room; facing northeast.

Photograph 10 of 10

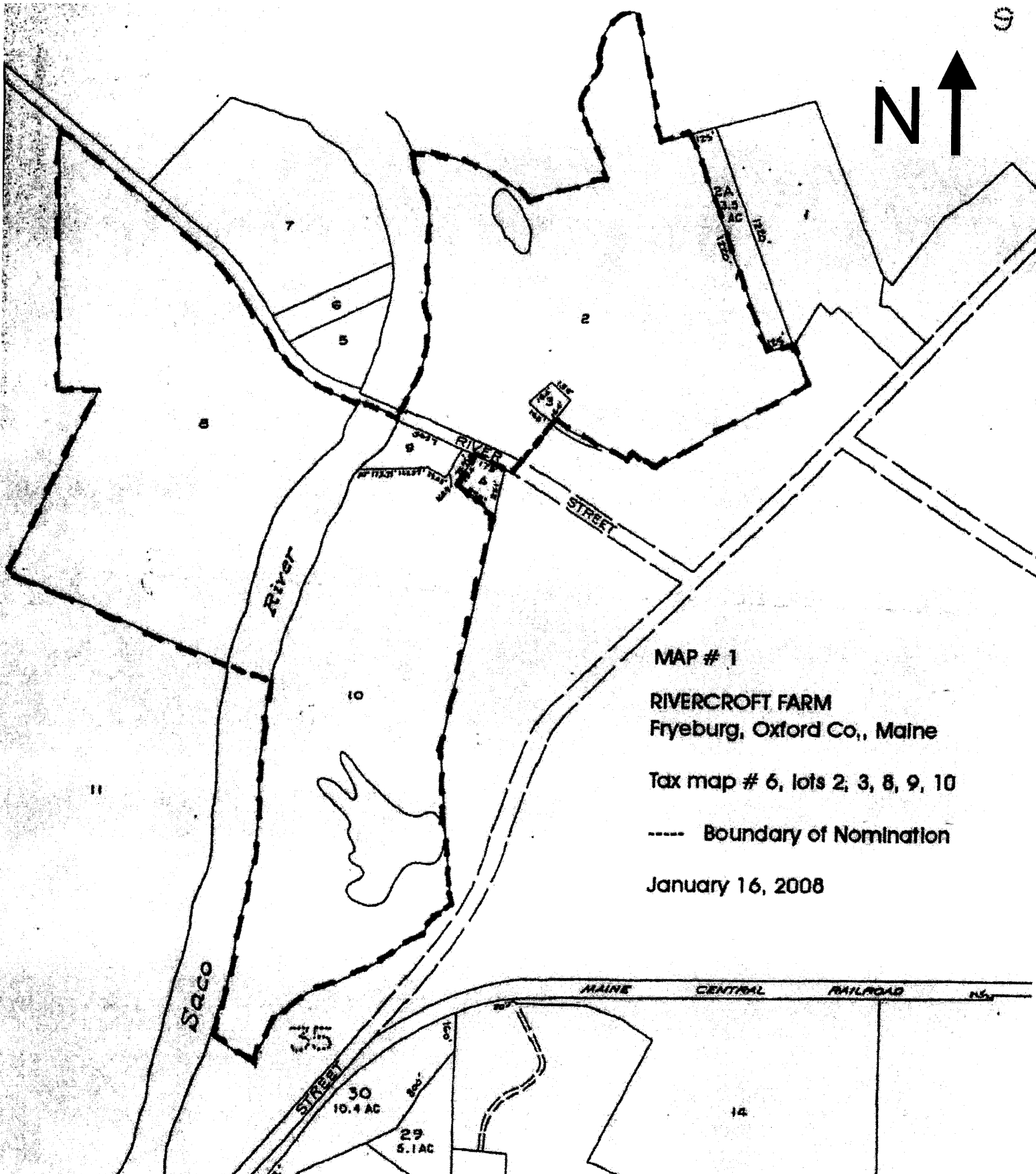
ME_OxfordCounty_WestonFarm_010.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

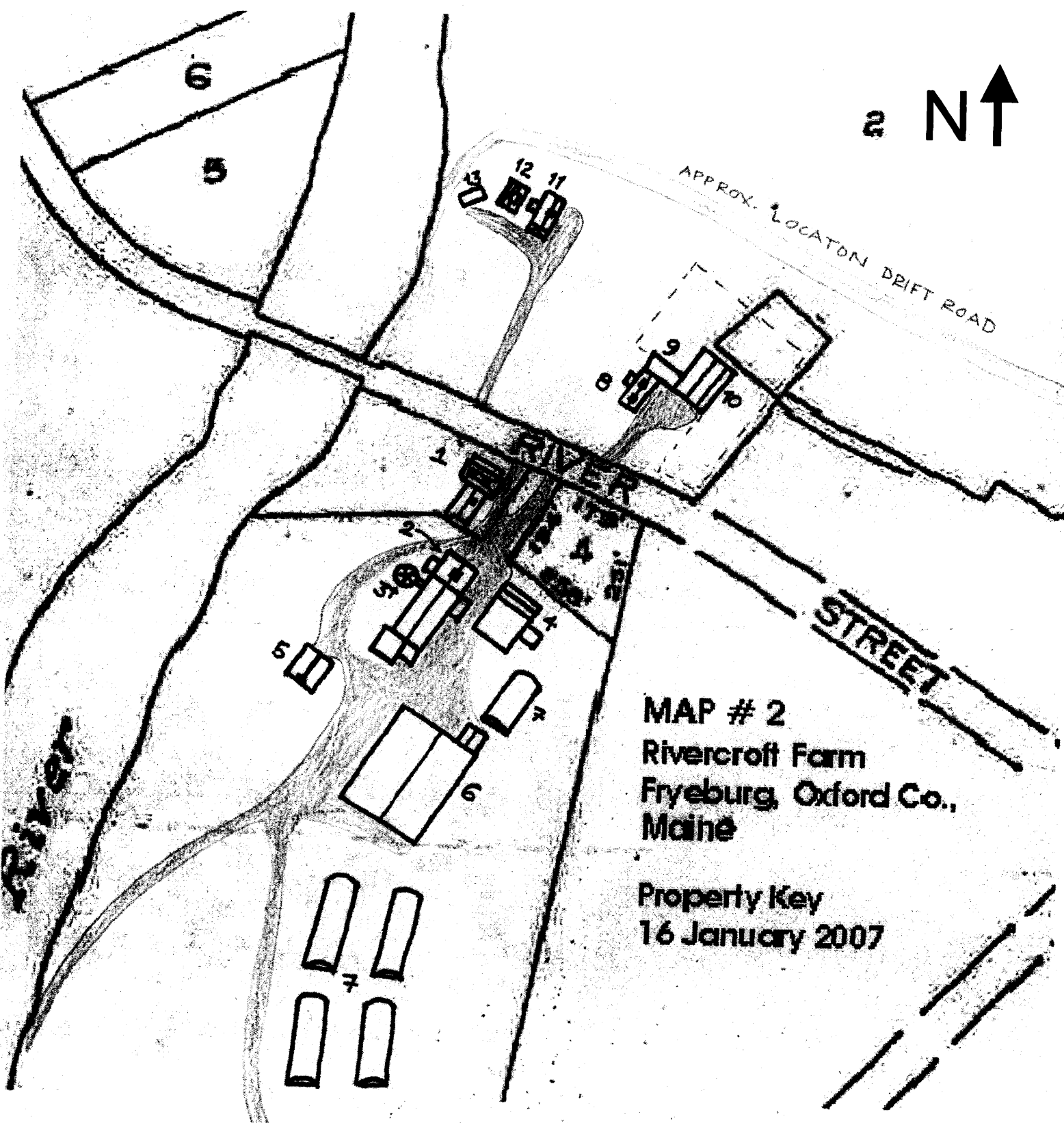
Maine Historic Preservation Commission

23 October 2007

Interior, Weston House front hall; facing north.



MAP # 1
 RIVERCROFT FARM
 Fryeburg, Oxford Co., Maine
 Tax map # 6, lots 2, 3, 8, 9, 10
 ----- Boundary of Nomination
 January 16, 2008



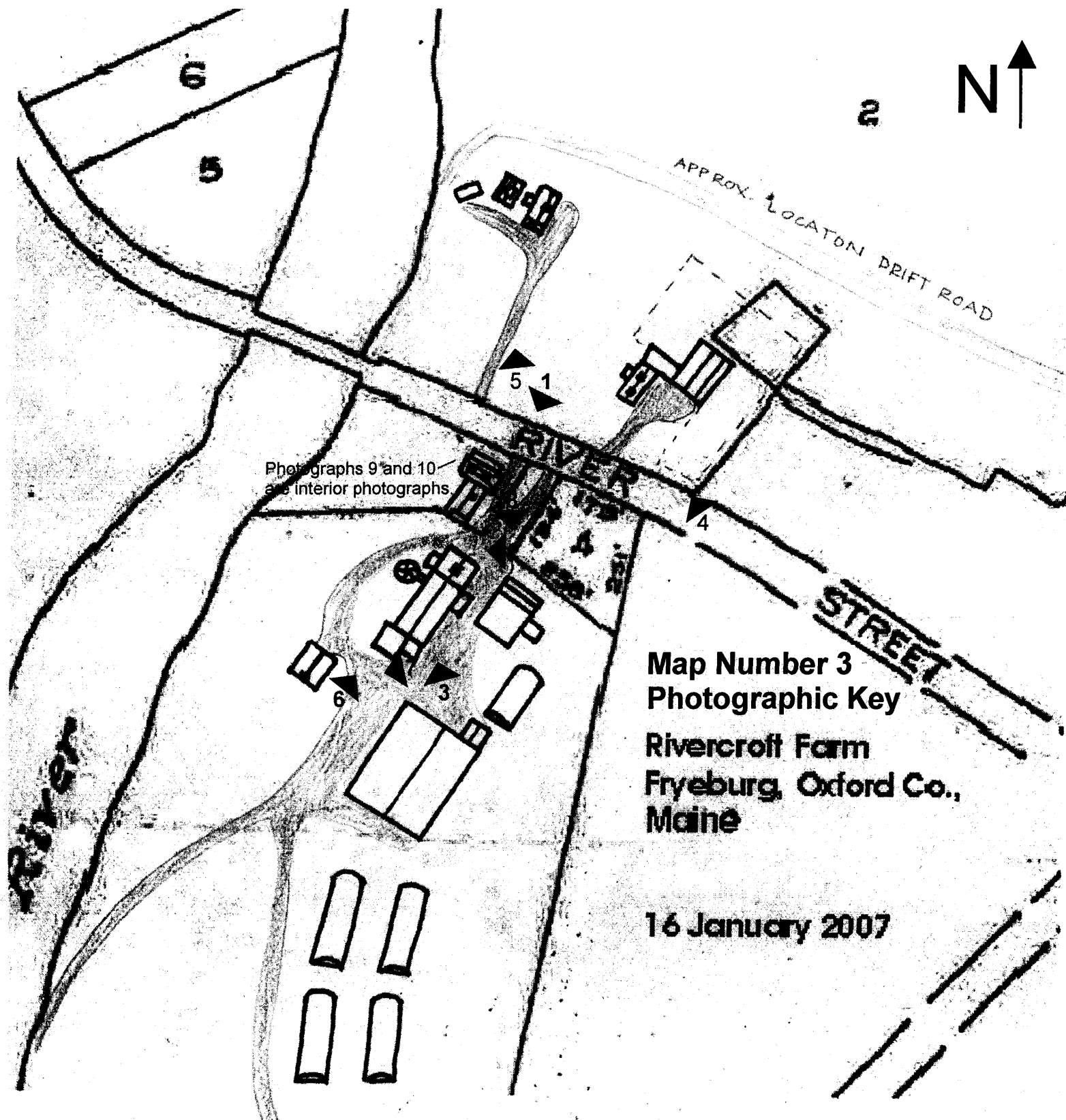
MAP # 2
Rivercroft Farm
Fryeburg, Oxford Co.,
Maine

Property Key
16 January 2007



2

APPROX. LOCATION DRIFT ROAD



Photographs 9 and 10
are interior photographs

**Map Number 3
Photographic Key
Rivercroft Farm
Fryeburg, Oxford Co.,
Maine**

16 January 2007